



**OFFICE OF
STATE TREASURER
DENISE L. NAPIER**

NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, April 24, 2002

STATE TREASURER URGES STUDENTS TO SAVE MONEY, CALLS FOR GREATER EFFORT TO IMPROVE FINANCIAL LITERACY

Classroom Visits Mark "Teach Your Children to Save" Day as a New Federal Survey Shows Students Lacking in Financial Literacy

State Treasurer Denise L. Nappier, a strong advocate for financial education, especially among young people, told students at three Connecticut schools today that "the first step on the road to success is developing good saving habits," along with a solid knowledge of personal finance basics as money management, investing and use of credit.

Nappier and Citizens Bank Regional President Ned Handy spoke with third, fifth and sixth grade students at the Snow School in **Middletown**, the Regional Multicultural Magnet School in **Waterford**, and the Integrated Day Charter School in **Norwich**, marking "Teach Your Children to Save" Day. It was the second consecutive year that the State Treasurer's Office collaborated with Citizens Bank to stress the importance of saving to Connecticut students.

Treasurer Nappier said that the results of a recent financial literacy test given to high school seniors -- announced this week by the Federal Reserve -- underscored the need to improve financial literacy among the nation's young people. In a 31-question multiple choice exam on personal finance and economic topics administered to more than 4,000 students, the average grade was 50, down from an average of 57 in 1997.

"That's a failing grade," Nappier said, "and that's unacceptable. We must work together to provide young people with a basic understanding of financial concepts and the information they'll need to make informed financial decisions throughout their lives."

"I have come to the conclusion, Nappier said, "that one of the greatest gifts we can give our young people, aside from instilling in them a sense of the right values and morals, is to teach them about the importance of investing prudently in their future and the power that comes with economic self-sufficiency."

Nappier urged the students to learn about the different choices available for saving and investing money, and to develop the habit of setting aside some of the money they earn. The Treasurer said financial education should be integrated throughout school curricula, at the elementary, middle and high school levels. She also said increased financial literacy would be best achieved if

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families and schools work together toward a common goal of improving young people's understanding and awareness of personal finance.

The survey, sponsored by the JumpStart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy, a nonprofit group, and released by the Federal Reserve, asked students questions on personal finance topics including credit cards, insurance, retirement funds and investments options such as the stock market, U.S. Savings bonds, and savings accounts.

"Financial education can start by opening a savings account for a child, and teaching them the miracle of compound interest," Nappier said. "Even children in grade school understand that earning money is a good thing, and that can be the beginning of even greater knowledge about saving and investing."

Nappier said that financial education is important among adults as well as children, but beginning at a young age will "yield a solid return, for individuals, their families and their communities."